

Representative Tim Sheldon
414 Legislative Building
PO BOX 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600
(360) 786-7902



A report to the 35th District

BULK RATE
U. S. POSTAGE PAID
Permit #92
Olympia, Washington



Representative Tim Sheldon

Committees:
Natural Resources
Trade & Economic Development

A report to the 35th District

June 1997

Dear Neighbor:

The 1997 Legislative Session ended on a very positive note. The Legislature actually adjourned the 105-day session on schedule for the first time in 40 years!

This year, I successfully passed four bills into law that will help a large number of 35th District constituents. Two of the four new laws include:

- House Bill 1473 provides low-interest loans to businesses creating new manufacturing jobs in the state's high-unemployment areas.
- House Bill 2163 was passed after local veterans asked me to sponsor legislation to facilitate the Department of Licensing process for obtaining remembrance emblems for veterans' vehicle-license plates. This legislation will triple the amount of money collected through the voluntary emblem program that funds construction and maintenance of veterans' memorials across the state.

Early in the session, I proposed an unusual amendment to the Rules of the House of Representatives that govern internal and parliamentary procedures. My amendment, which was adopted unanimously, directs that for the first time in our state's history the House members must adhere to the same liquor laws as every other Washington state citizen and organization. As role models for young people, our standards of conduct should always be above reproach.

A brief summary of major decisions I made as your state representative is included in this newsletter. If you would like more information about these or other issues, just ask.

As always, it is an honor to serve you in the Washington State Legislature.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tim Sheldon". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Tim Sheldon
State Representative
35th District

Olympia office:
414 Legislative Building
PO Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600
(360) 786-7902
E-mail: sheldon_ti@leg.wa.gov

Representative Tim Sheldon — Voting record for the 1997 session

- ✓ **Tougher punishment for criminals** — I voted **YES**. We approved two important measures to improve public safety and establish tougher punishment for criminals. One bill directs that men convicted of having sex with a minor girl must pay restitution, including medical costs and child support if the girl becomes pregnant. Another measure states that crime victims will have an advocate present at judicial proceedings. The measures passed the Legislature and have been signed into law.
- ✓ **Juvenile-justice reform** — I voted **YES**. The most violent juvenile offenders should be held more accountable and face tougher punishment for their crimes. The juvenile-justice reform approved this year will automatically send these criminal youth to adult court. Juveniles' records will no longer be wiped clean when they become adults. The measure will also give judges more discretion in determining the appropriate punishment for young offenders. The bill passed the Legislature and has been signed into law.
- ✓ **Lottery revenue for school construction** — I voted **YES**. This legislation directs that half the lottery revenue would be used to set up a school-construction-endowment fund. The idea is to establish a stable, perpetual source of income to pay for the construction of new school buildings. I don't believe that the lion's share of the cost of new schools should be charged to homeowners, which is now the case. This fund would help correct that unfairness. The bill passed the House but didn't pass the Senate.
- ✓ **Property-tax cuts** — I voted **YES**. I supported legislation that would provide a permanent 4.7 percent property-tax reduction. The bill passed the Legislature and will be on the ballot in this fall's election. My proposal to limit the skyrocketing assessed values of real estate was not passed this year.
- ✓ **Relief for flood victims** — I voted **YES**. We approved legislation that will provide assistance to help rain and flood victims in coastal Washington counties and other regions ransacked by the violent winter storms. Half of the families in the region devastated by the awful March weather live in the 35th District. This account will help them put their lives, homes and property back together. The measures passed the Legislature, but one of them was vetoed by the governor.
- ✓ **Elk River Estuary** — I voted **YES**. We approved legislation that will keep the Elk River Estuary in Grays Harbor County open for the kind of public use that has been a tradition for many generations. The bill passed the Legislature and has been signed into law.
- ✓ **The \$1.9 billion capital budget** — I voted **YES**. The state's "bricks-and-mortar budget" provides more than \$400 million in funds for K-12 and college and university construction. Funding for repair of storm damage to the Olympic College library in Bremerton is included in the 1997 supplemental capital budget.
- ✓ **The \$3.1 billion transportation budget** — I voted **YES**. This budget includes money for 66 new state troopers, as well as highway-improvement projects, improved ferry service and other transportation work. Although some legislators advocated a higher gas tax, such a proposal never came up for a vote. We also directed that the state Department of Transportation be thoroughly audited to determine where money can be saved. Complete audits are always appropriate before any new taxes are considered.
- ✓ **The \$19.1 billion operating budget** — I voted **NO**. While I strongly support the fact that the budget is well under the spending limit imposed by Initiative 601, I was disappointed in the lack of adequate budget funding for worker-retraining programs in our distressed timber and fishing communities. The Employment and Training Trust Fund, for example, is a very successful program that has provided more than 20,000 unemployed workers a chance to support themselves and their families. The vast majority of participants have found new jobs that pay decent wages. Unfortunately, the new budget cuts funds for this and other programs of assistance. I believe that economies could have been realized in other areas of the budget, and that money could then have provided appropriate funding for these programs. The operating budget passed the Legislature and has been signed into law.
- ✓ **Fingerprint legislation** — I voted **NO**. Legislation establishing a so-called finger-image-identification system for driver's licenses and identification cards was discussed this year. I opposed it because of the potential for abuse. A person's fingerprint is private and the proposed electronic fingerprinting records could be used for other purposes. The bill passed the House but didn't pass the Senate. (There was another unsuccessful proposal to include Social Security numbers on driver's licenses and to issue different-color licenses for citizens who consented to fingerprinting. This would have created suspicion of citizens who declined to be fingerprinted.)
- ✓ **Football-stadium legislation** — I voted **NO**. The bill passed the Legislature and a statewide vote on this proposal will be held on June 17.

Town Hall meetings: I look forward to hearing your thoughts

I hope you'll drop by one or both of the upcoming Town Hall meetings to talk about legislative issues or any other matters of concern. Please mark these dates on your calendar:

- **Wednesday, June 18**, from 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. in Bremerton at the Cascade Natural Gas building, which is located at 6313 Kitsap Way.
 - **Tuesday, June 24**, from 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. in McCleary at the Beehive Retirement Center, which is located at 401 Maple Street.
-